

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Use of the public airwaves for the public interest does not mean that broadcasters can simply use channels and conglomerates of channels to air their personal opinions. Use of the public airwaves for the public interest means airing both sides of every story, particularly in the run-up to presidential election. This should be obvious. This is not Putin's Russia.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.